

2  
motions that do not fit the times. We do not mean  
to be shamed by our children as old-fashioned folk  
~~and up to the times~~. It seems to us that it is no touch  
with the <sup>times</sup> day is our business as parents, so long,  
at any rate, as until our youngest is in his  
twenties. Our children may go off at a tangent  
from our line of thought & feeling, not only about  
the best things, but on matters only less  
dear to our hearts. This must always be  
sad & cannot always be helped. But it is  
a contingency to that we must be feeling  
readiness from the beginning. We want to be  
ready for them as fellow-thinkers ~~when they grow up~~  
not the children are eager to set in order their  
ideas about all things in heaven & earth.  
Then, though we may not be able to keep them  
beside us, going the way we <sup>individually</sup> go, we may be able  
to see that ours is not ~~entirely~~ <sup>individually</sup>. The best way  
for them: at any rate, we may secure. That we  
do not part company from them lightly, nor  
they are not ready, high-minded, too open to  
other influence than the best. but, in the  
modesty of conviction they take their course,  
as led by a way that they know not.  
Then a party may come, & we may be ashamed  
of it, but this may needs be no breach in  
common daily ways, when each side is sur  
of almost sincerity, invincibility, suregny of  
conviction on the other. Oh dear! how I am  
- strong speaking

3  
Moxit.  
~~presenting~~! you will think of those wonderful days  
of our seventeenth years, when there was nothing above  
or below. Since our philosophy could not settle - we  
not - agreed to!

But - to bring all this into a practical conclusion,  
I think we may keep up with the children by  
trying to keep in touch with the movements  
of the day - & - plunging headlong headlong  
into all the new ways of saving the world.  
But - while helping all we can, we must avoid  
being carried along by party spirit to  
swallow the ill with the good.

Next: my husband & I promise ourselves to  
read steadily such books, old & new, as tend to  
make their mark on character, & give some  
idea of our progress, in whatever direction  
they are moving us. Are you longing at  
the idea of parents with such a mighty  
programme? But - I think we can manage  
to work through some quiet, at any rate,  
by seeking most reverently every book or  
that sort of thing.

(1880) 77

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I begin to suspect that all this is by way  
of preface now, on the real no object of this letter.  
Have you read "Robert Ellice"? Of course you  
have. All this year, everybody has been asking  
everybody these one question. We have just got  
through it for the second time. It has done us  
<sup>influence</sup> many difficulties, & given us lots of

boy is his father over again.  
not to return to the book. You know this - a truly  
christian life the young clergymen lead, & how  
heavenly-minded, - even if a little narrow - is the  
woman who marries. The first volume is delightful -  
a story of kingdom come; pure earthily love, ever  
waiting at the headwaters of love, for inspiration,  
direction, - laws of service. Right you stand;  
but there is a leak somewhere. the enemy may  
any day come in as a flood. Then, all at once  
with little to lead up to it, comes the catastrophe,  
a spiritless man. Elmer is bowled over, with  
hardly a struggle to keep his feet, by no state or  
argument - no "miracles don't happen!"  
Then follows a kind ofland-slip, bearing down  
all the bulwarks of Christianity. Miracles don't  
happen; therefore, the Resurrection hasn't happened.  
Therefore, the Christians King is this crowned; God has not  
spoken to man, and there is no revelation. What  
is left? A falter hope that there is a God, & that  
if to be, he may be gracious. Even an ~~but~~  
~~certainly~~ of anything beyond the grave? The one  
certainty left is - our brother: he, the selected  
brother, is a - wretch, a fact - gross enough and  
therefore, let a man make himself the victim  
from others; let him gain so much along  
from the wreck of life. Here is the sum of the  
whole matter, as far as man has the  
means of knowing. There may be more; but, what  
knows?

It is more than a story; it is a remarkable study of  
the rise & progress of importunity. I should think

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6 // A most true picture of hell is going on to-day in many  
an silent nature. That is by Edward and here we  
ourselves to analyze it as carefully as if it ~~happened~~  
to be the true story of a living man. Do, don't  
you think that every man & woman has an spiritual  
epidemic in the air, as ~~catching~~ <sup>and</sup> comes,  
& that it is the business of parents to keep their  
eyes open & take measures to prevent their  
children from infection? You will say, perhaps,  
that it is better the young people should ask crucial  
questions at any cost than that they should  
sit at their ease, believing, with a high-deep kick,  
all they are told, because they care for none of  
these things? I daresay it is, but then, when  
they come to ask these searching questions,  
~~ready by me then, not the~~  
I think we should be ~~bold~~ at least to act as  
~~formalized~~ <sup>from youth, but the fresh living thought of the day,</sup>  
~~gives~~ <sup>it supports</sup> ~~posts, directing them towards the truth.~~ Let  
me tell you the more <sup>in</sup> form practical controversy  
we have now to answer the spiritual history  
of Robert Barnes.

And first, — we all like to be in the front rank  
of thinkers; "For 'tis our nature to; we follow the lead  
of the most advanced school we know of till  
we get an intaking upon other enterie ahead. We  
quit the old church after the new, till, behold!  
others, so far on as to be nearly out of sight.  
We hurry up, learn the new chibbolethes, & as of  
rest, till we expect that there or more still  
beyond us. This desire ~~is~~ amongst the greatest  
curiosities.

July 20th 1853

which most of us have known in our youth, makes  
little, so long as its objects are the mere - things of  
customs, bonnets, & chestes. But now thought  
matures have higher ambitions; they will work  
with the boldest thinkers on the deep things of  
life. Away with the old sanctions! All they  
want is that of contemporary authority. They  
lives by the name of the ~~old~~<sup>more advanced</sup> - works in the  
schools they have taken up with.

Con with Robert Palmer; he hunted with  
the horned at Oxford, apparently unshaken;  
now made a direct attack upon his principles;  
she was content to be in touch with advanced  
thought, yet, hold to the old way. But no  
wonder is he let loose amongst the Squires  
to try to find the ancient outworks of belief  
demolished with a high hand, then, prent!  
he greatest the old at a bound, enrols  
himself amongst the disciples of the new. Think  
what a name these men have! Consider his  
deep learning shifft thinking! What can a man  
do better than follow this lead? And overboard  
goes the whole cargo of heretical beliefs. &  
that, purely out - prospect - for the authority of  
his contemporaries, the word of the forefathers,  
"What is it?" cry the outsiders in a crowd.  
"Oh, 'tis a man with two heads!" is passed  
from a vag in the midst; & associated with  
out question, for "See, he ought to know!"  
Now, Edward says, this here are two things we

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we parents should keep well in view. - in  
spiritual epidemics of the day; & the tendency of  
human nature to follow the lead of its foremost.  
These outbreaks, we must, of course, wait for,  
& deal with as they come. But, certainly, we  
can accustom our children to look  
contemporaneous authority, scientific or  
historical, fully in the face, & state it for ~~what~~  
it is worth.

I am always thinking that, as a girl, I read  
a certain magazine article written by a  
scientific man of great eminence, you  
have never since been taken off my feet -  
the authority of a great name. The writer had  
to sit to see, that Science had not a word to say  
about the origin of things until it could track  
up to its source. The crucial question, such  
Science had not touched, was, to him, how can  
there to be life, animal or vegetable, upon an  
island. And now for his solution - a solution  
which should do away with the needs of a  
Creator. - Some elder planet, ~~in its course~~  
~~and~~ alone passing Earth in its course  
had cast off a rocky fragment, which  
lodged upon Earth. This fragment had  
contained the germs, at least, of life, animal  
- vegetable, lodged in its crevices. & so,  
the rest follows! - A world clothed upon  
with verdure & sustaining innumerable  
living creatures.

It was only a shock to me, at the time, to find